

# Wetlands Reserve Program



*WRP helps landowners and operators restore and protect degraded and altered wetlands on privately owned lands through permanent easements with restoration, and restoration cost-share agreements.*



Stonehouse Pond Easement and Restoration (Wetlands Reserve Program – WRP)

On June 17<sup>th</sup>, the Trust for Public Land (TPL), Strafford Rivers Conservancy (SRC), NH Fish and Game, and the Town of Barrington celebrated the permanent protection of over 240 acres of land, including Stonehouse Pond. TPL purchased the property from the Carolyn S. Bedford Trust, and transferred ownership to the SRC, which will manage the property. It will be available to the public for low-impact recreational use such as hiking, bird-watching, fishing, trapping, hunting, cross country skiing, and canoeing.

Set in Barrington, NH, Stonehouse Pond is a wilderness gem to the community. It has been a conservation priority for several years now, especially with the Town of Barrington. Phil Auger, of UNH Cooperative Extension, remarked, “Stonehouse Pond is one of the open space jewels of southeastern New Hampshire. Generations of residents have rejoiced at its beauty, enjoyed fishing in its waters, and recreating in the woodlands that surround it.”

The easement protection process started 2007 when TPL bought 11.56 acres from Parkhurst family. For the next three years, funds were raised to complete the acquisition of 230.2 acres surrounding and including Stonehouse Pond. Gregg Caparossi, TPL project manager said “TPL began discussions with the Bedford Family more than three years ago, but we owe successful outcome in no small part to the patience of the landowners and the perseverance of the many dedicated organizations and volunteers who worked



hard to help conserve this wonderful property.” Those involved with the project, and community members alike, are happy to see this scenic landscape protected. NRCS contributed \$652,927 through the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), covering the majority of the cost of land acquisition. NRCS funded a total of 62 easements through WRP last year worth over \$20,000,000. In the case of Stonehouse Pond, WRP not only helped protect the property, but it will provide funding for restoration of compromised wetland habitats. Other funding sources included Barrington’s Conservation Fund, NH Conservation Committee, NH Fish and Game’s Fish Habitat Fund, Piscataqua Region Estuaries Partnership grants, foundation grants and individual donations.

Stonehouse Pond Easement